What is claimed is:

1.   A method for providing a visual representation of the consequences of taking an action, comprising:

first moving a cursor in response to input from a user;

first detecting a position of said cursor within an application window; and

5   in response to said position of said cursor corresponding to a first selectable item within said application window, displaying a depiction of a consequence of selecting said first selectable item.

2.   The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

second moving a cursor in response to input from a user;

second detecting a position of said cursor; and

in response to said position of said cursor no longer corresponding to said first

5   selectable item within said application window, discontinuing said displaying a depiction of a consequence of selecting said first selectable item.

3.   The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

second moving a cursor in response to input from said user;

second detecting a position of said cursor within said application window; and

in response to said position of said cursor corresponding to a second selectable

5   item within said application window, displaying a consequence of selecting said second selectable item.

4.   The method of Claim 1, wherein said displaying a depiction of a consequence of selecting said first selectable item comprises displaying a result of selecting said first selectable item in a way that is visually altered as compared to a display in response to an actual selection of said first selectable item.

5.   The method of Claim 1, wherein said displaying comprises displaying as a transparent overlay.

6.   The method of Claim 5, wherein said transparent overlay comprises an alpha-blended rendering.

7.   The method of Claim 1, wherein said displaying comprises displaying as a stencil outline.

8.   The method of Claim 1, wherein said displaying comprises previewing a consequence of selecting said selectable item.

9.   The method of Claim 1, wherein said step of displaying is further in response to said cursor remaining within an area corresponding to said selectable item for at least a first period of time.

10. The method of Claim 1, wherein said selectable item comprises at least one of a menu item, an icon, and a button.

11. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

detecting a selection of said first selectable item;

in response to said detecting a selection said first selectable item, displaying a consequence of selecting said first selectable item, wherein an appearance of said

5   depiction of a consequence of selecting said selectable item is different than an appearance of said consequence of selecting said selectable item.

12. The method of Claim 1, wherein said method is performed with respect to a graphical user interface.

13. The method of Claim 1, wherein said displayed depiction comprises a depiction of at least one of a submenu, sub-window or file contents.

14. The method of Claim 1, further comprising;

after said displaying a depiction of a consequence of selecting said selectable item, in response to a position of said cursor no longer corresponding to said selectable item, discontinuing said displaying a depiction of a consequence of selecting said

5   selectable item.

15.   The method of Claim 1, further comprising;

displaying an indication of a relationship between said selectable item and said depiction of a consequence of selecting said selectable item.

16.   The method of Claim 15, wherein said indication of a relationship between said selectable item and said depiction of a consequence of selecting said selectable item comprises a projection line.

17.   A computational component for performing a method, the method comprising:

determining a position of a cursor; and

in response to said position of said cursor hovering over a first selectable item,

5   depicting a consequence of selecting said first selectable item.

18.   The method of Claim 17, further comprising;

second determining a position of said cursor; and

in response to said cursor no longer hovering over said first selectable item,

discontinuing said depicting a consequence of selecting said first selectable item.

19.   The method of Claim 18, wherein said discontinuing is performed in the

absence of a user selection of a second selectable item for discontinuing said depicting a

consequence of selecting said first selectable item;

20.   The method of Claim 18, further comprising:

third determining a position of said cursor; and

in response to said position of said cursor hovering over a second selectable item,

depicting a consequence of selecting said second selectable item.

21.   The method of Claim 17, wherein said consequence of selecting said first

selectable item is displayed as an overlay transparency.

22.   The method of Claim 17, wherein said consequence of selecting said first selectable item is displayed as a stencil outline.

23.   The method of Claim 17, wherein said depicted consequence of selecting a first selectable item comprises displaying at least one of an inactive submenu, an inactive window, and an inactive dialogue.

24.   The method of Claim 17, wherein said first selectable item comprises a file identifier, and wherein said depicting a consequence of selecting said first selectable item comprises displaying at least a portion of a file.

25.   The method of Claim 17, wherein said consequence of selecting said first selectable item comprises a submenu.

26.   The method of Claim 17, wherein said consequence of selecting said first selectable item comprises a subwindow.

27.   The method of Claim 17, further comprising:

5   in response to a selection of said first selectable item, displaying at least one of an active submenu and an active window.

28.   The method of Claim 17, wherein said hovering over a first selectable item comprises said cursor remaining in an area corresponding to said first selectable item for at least a first predetermined period of time;

29.   The method of Claim 17, wherein said computational component comprises a computer readable storage medium containing instructions for performing the method.

30.   The method of Claim 17, wherein said computational component comprises a logic circuit.

31. An apparatus for displaying a consequence of a selection to a user, comprising:

means for visually displaying;

means for receiving user input;

means for determining a position of a cursor, wherein said cursor is displayed by said means for visually displaying and is responsive to said means for receiving user input;

means for determining a relationship between a position of a selectable item displayed by said means for visually displaying and said cursor; and

means for generating a depiction of a consequence of selecting said selectable item at least when said cursor is within an area occupied by said selectable item on said means for visually displaying.

32. The apparatus of Claim 31, wherein said depiction of a consequence of selecting said selectable item comprises displaying said consequences as a transparent overlay.

33. The apparatus of Claim 31, wherein said means for receiving user input comprises a pointing device.

34.　　An apparatus for providing a depiction of the consequences of making a

selection, comprising:

5　　　　　data storage, wherein at least a first application is maintained in said data storage;

a data processor operable to execute instructions included in said first application;

a visual display operable to display graphical elements generated in connection

with said execution of said instructions included in said first application and operable to

display a cursor;

10　　　　　a pointing device operable to receive commands from a user concerning a position

of said cursor with respect to said graphical elements, wherein a depiction of the

consequences of selecting a selectable item included in said graphical elements is

displayed in response to detecting that said cursor is hovering over said selectable item.

35.　　The apparatus of Claim 34, wherein said pointing device includes a button

for receiving an indication of a user selection, and wherein said depiction of the

consequences of selecting a selectable item is displayed in the absence of operation of

said button.